REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration in light of the following:

The Rejection of claims 1-8, 10-11, 13-15, 18, and 20-25 as being unpatentable over Kazama (USP 5,414,369) in view of Gabrielian (USP 4,029,375).

Applicants respectfully note that the examination of these claims over the Kazama reference has clarified that Kazama in no way teaches or suggests, for example, the electroconductive contact probe of claim 1 which requires the element of "said electroconductive coil springs being installed in said holder holes such that each electroconductive coil spring extends by its natural length under a rest condition of said contact member." Applicant has noted previously the advantages of such a probe – for example, as discussed by the Applicants on page 2, lines 1 – 22, as circuit density decreases the spacing between coil springs in modern circuit probes, the spring force from the compression coil springs warps the holder member containing the springs. In that regard, Kazama plainly teaches that the coil springs are installed in a compressed state when the probe is in a rest (no contact to the test circuit) state as set forth in Col. 3, lines 36-41.

Because of Kazama's fundamental flaw, the Gabrielian reference has been cited. But note carefully what Gabrielian discloses: as shown in Figure 1, each coil spring comprises a thicker portion 9 and a thinner portion 10. Gabrielian teaches that the thicker portion 9 is compressed in a rest state by stating "the last convolution of the 9 portion of the spring is butted against shoulder 8." Col. 2, lines 49-50. It may thus be seen that in a rest state, portion 9 is resiliently biased against shoulder 8 and also against contact 5. The fact that Gabrielian further teaches an uncompressed portion 10 of the spring in a rest state is irrelevant to whether a spring bias (compression) exists during a rest state for the coil spring.

Furthermore, as a spring bias exists in portion 9 during a state of rest, the last convolution of portion 9 does not so readily become removed from shoulder 8, as taught in column 2, line 57-58, but depends on the degree of spring bias in portion 9 prior to contact with insulative member 6. As further proof that portion 9 is under compression, Gabrialian, column 3, lines 51-52, discloses "Rivet 11 is one form of a permanent compressed-in-place fitment". An examination of FIG. 1 reveals that there is no structure other than portion 9 which rivet 11 can place in a state of "compressed-in-place".

Additionally, concerning claim 20, Applicants traverse the Examiner statement "It would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the uncompressed

spring as taught by Gabrielian to the device of Kazama so that when the test is performed, the amount of applied force on the spring to the conductive test areas are under control so that the conductive test areas are not damaged by the force. To the contrary, neither claim 20, nor anywhere in the specification is it taught that the design of the invention is to control the applied force to prevent damage to the conductive test areas. Rather, the invention teaches the control of force to prevent warpage or damage to the holder or its parts, such as support members 3.

In other words, claim 1 requires the electroconductive spring itself to be in the natural state, not a mere portion. Accordingly, claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-8 are patentable over the cited prior art. Additional independent claim 10 (and its dependent claims 11, 13-15, and 18) as well as independent claim 20 (and its dependent claims 21-25) are patentable over the cited prior art for analogous reasons.

CONCLUSION

The applicant therefore respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the rejections of the claims in this application, and to issue a notice of allowance for all pending claims. If the examiner has any questions, he is requested to call the attorney for Applicant at (949)-752-7040.

CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION
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Typed or printed name of person signing this certificate:

Monique M. Butler

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Respectfully submitted,

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